

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

Claim 1. (canceled)

Claim 2. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising a seal for providing sealed fluid communication between the first flanged fitting and the second flanged fitting.

Claim 3. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising an interior surface having a conical self-alignment portion adapted to orient the second flanged fitting relative to the first flanged fitting.

Claim 4. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 3, wherein the self alignment portion is adapted to orient the two flanged fittings from a maximum of about 10° of angular misalignment therebetween.

Claim 5. (canceled)

Claim 6. (currently amended) A self-aligning coupling for mating a pair of axial arranged first and second flanged fittings, the coupling comprises:

- a) first and second arms adapted for pivotal connection to one another, and having open and closed relative pivotal positions in use, wherein the first and second arms further comprise outwardly extending ears having apertures ~~for receiving the fastener~~;
- b) a rotational assist mechanism adapted to mechanically effectuate the closing of the first and second arms relative to a pair of flanged fittings to be connected in use, and further adapted to provide motion between the first arm and the second arm to receive and secure the second flanged fitting; and
- c) a fastener received in the apertures for further securing the arms in the closed

position.

Claim 7. (previously presented) The self-aligning coupling of claim 6, wherein the fastener comprises a C-clamp.

Claim 8. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~4~~ 6, further comprising a garter spring arranged to normally bias the arms toward the closed position.

Claim 9. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 8, wherein the first and second arms further comprise a garter groove to at least partially receive the garter spring in use.

Claim 10. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~4~~ 6, wherein each arm comprises a single mating groove adapted to receive the flanges of the pair of flanged fittings in use.

Claims 11-13. (canceled)

Claim 14. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~4~~ 6, wherein at least one of the arms further comprises a self-alignment surface wherein the self-alignment surface angularly aligns the second flanged fitting with the first flanged fitting in the closed position.

Claims 15-18. (canceled)

Claim 19. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~4~~ 6, further comprising a mating groove at least partially defined by a portion of each arm.

Claim 20. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 19, further comprising a seal disposed within the mating groove in use.

Claims 21-24. (canceled)

Claim 25. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~24~~ 6, wherein the

rotational assist mechanism comprises first and second interacting members adapted to mechanically synchronize rotational orientation of the two arms as they are pivoted in use.

Claims 26-29. (canceled)

Claim 30. (currently amended) ~~The~~ A self-aligning coupling for mating a pair of corresponding flanged fittings, comprising:

- a) a pair of arms adapted for pivotal connection between open and closed positions, the arms at least partially defining a mating groove adapted to receive at least portions of a pair of flanged fittings to be coupled;
- b) a rotational assist mechanism linking the arms and adapted to move the arms such that the flanged fittings can be received in the mating groove as the arms are effectively pivoted to the closed position; and
- c) a clamp selectively affixing the arms in the closed position.

Claim 31. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~24~~ 6, wherein the arms are hingedly oriented in a clamshell arrangement relative to one another in use.

Claim 32. (canceled)

Claim 33. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim ~~1~~ 30, wherein the rotational assist mechanism effectuates the closing of the first and second arms relative to the pair of flanged fittings by moving the first and second arms in synchronization.